LIBERTY AND EQUALITY;

TREATED OF IN A

SHORT HISTORY

ADDRESSED FROM

A POOR MAN

TO

HIS EQUALS.

THE THIRD EDITION.

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1792.

LIBERTY AND BOUALITY #

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READER,

Am not by trade an author, as critics may perhaps discover, but a plain unlearned man, labouring for my fubfiftance at a bufiness I have diligently followed for fifteen years; and when I tell you I live amongstwork only for-and am paid by none, but -a fmall number of poor people, and it will be needless to add I am a poor man myfelf, you will easily guess to what class of people I now address myself as my Equals. But that you may not be induced to buy my book through charity, I shall tell you, neither my Wife, Children, or Self, have ever yet, thank God, known what it is actually to want; and I have both spirit to feel, and courage to declare, I now write from no motive but benevolence.

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LIBERTY

AND

EQUALITY, &c.

I HERE has of late been fo much talk amongst us about Liberty and Equality, that it may feem needless for a poor man to give himself the trouble to write about either one or the other: but I find none have at prefent fo much at stake as we middling people, who are in the greatest danger of being deceived into our ruin, by the efforts of artful men, who would perfuade us it is for our interest to join them, in afferting our liberty, (as they call it) by fubverting the present order of things, and making every one Equal. Now to speak the truth, (as I hope I always shall) I must own, I was for a while deceived, as much as my Neighbours; but then, the fnake was fo flyly hid in the grafs, that I verily believe the Devil himself must have had some hand in placing him there.-Now I'll tell you how this was.

At a Public house where my Comrades, and I sometimes go on a Saturday night to chat over our business, and spend six-pence each; we were frequently met by a thin, pale-faced fellow, whose looks, to be sure, were no great things in his favour, but then he was as clever a body to speak as you shall meet with amongst a thousand; so much so, that none of us cared to contradict him, even when we knew he did not speak truth.

He was quite a stranger to us, so not knowing his name, we called him the Speaker, though latterly amongst ourselves, Mr.

MAC'SERPENT.

The first time I saw him, there were about a dozen of us together, being chiefly working people, and all, thank God, doing pretty well in the world.

After a little common chat about indiffeent things, he began to wheedle, and compliment first one and then another of us, just like a Parliament man who wanted our votes, having a laugh ready for every body's story, and a tear to drop for every one's complaint.

Then he began faying, "These were hard "times!—very hard times, indeed, for poor

- " working people!—He could not conceive, for his part, how we contrived to live!
- " it quite made his poor dear heart bleed, to

" fee us fo treated, fo borne down, and op-

" pressed by the great and rich ?"

To be fure we could not miss of being pleased with all this, especially, as he spoke

fo like a Friend to us, and feemed to have our

happiness so much at heart.

Then he was fo kind as to tell us a great deal about France. "Lord bless you," faid he, "why every thing is quite different in " France, to what it is in England; they do " mighty well without laws there-they were " taught it by an English gentleman, -a stay-" maker; to be fure, it feemed a little " droll, just at first to see the Felons hanging " the judges, and pretty Women and Chil-" dren lying murdered about the ffreets, " with here and there a hundred or two of " old grey headed Priefts, stretched across "the way, with their throats cut; but now " they are used to it, it is considered as no-" thing more than a harmless kind of play " for the common people, and no body has " a right to be fo ill-natured as to prevent

" their amusing themselves."

At other times he would fay, "It was a "downright shame some folks should get " rich so much faster than we did, for there " was no doubt we should know how to " spend money as well as the best of them, if "we had it." Then France was brought up again, where "every thing was now "plentiful, for the great men having had "their Throats cut, could not eat up all the " bread as they used to do, and it was become " fo cheap and abundant, that the Bakers did " not care whether they were paid for it or "not. While wheat, good lack! was fo un-

" unrea-

" unreasonably dear, and wages so uncon-" scionably low, that in England, we were

" all starved to death, or what was just as

" good, very foon should be."

Now I really believe if he had told us it hailed two-penny loaves, he would not have pleased us better, than he did by this comfortable affurance that we were all starving; though at the same time I had something within me, that whifpered, I was not quite starved yet.

One night he told us, "All men ought to " be Equal, and on a level; that God made " us fo, but that some people had wickedly " fet themselves over our heads, for no other " reason but just to have the pleasure of op-" preffing us." Then he took out of his pocket a book which he faid "treated of the "Rights of Man, and was written by one

"Thomas Paine, Citizen."

- ROALIN

"Citizen," repeated I, "citizen at where? "Sure it can't be that Thomas Paine that " had been formerly fomething of an Excife-" man or Customhouse officer here in Eng-"land, but was now turned Frenchman, "and had been newly made a Citizen of "France, and Member of the French Con-" vention; as that's not your fort, to tell " an Englishman any thing for his good,-" fo this, no doubt, must be some worthy "Gentleman, a distant relation may hap' to " t'other fellow."

"I'll hold a gallon of beer," faid my coufin, the fat Cooper, who fat opposite me, "he's " nothing a kin to him; if he's half as good a " friend to us as this gentleman fays he is. "An Exciseman indeed! no! no! a better " man than that I'll warrant you, some good " fellow who never fat his foot in a public " house but to drink .- A Citizen of France "too! Why, have you lost your wits, man! "Would fuch an one as that take the trou-" ble to write a book for the good of us! " no, no, he must be some staunch English-" man, a good citizen at London, and more " likely Cousin to my Lord Mayor, than to "that mungrel Frenchman." He went on to banter me for alking such a simple question, pointing his finger at me and repeating—" A "Fellow, half Exciseman, and half French-" man, a friend to old England!"

This made such a laugh against me, that I was quite ashamed, and vext at my own simplicity, so I answered pretty sharply, "look "you, cousin Cooper, as to your holding a "gallon of beer, we all know you can do "that—and more too, if it's set before you; "---but tho' I don't chuse to lay wagers, I

"furely have a Right to ask a question!
"A Right," said Mac'Serpent! "yes, Sir,
"you have a right; its one of the Rights of

"Man: here, Friend, I present you with this book, read it, and it will convince you,

" you have a right both to fay, and do, every thing you please; but in future, be more

B "cautious

" cautious how you mention the name of " this great man but with the most profound " respect; had he, indeed, been only a "King, or a Prince; had he been nothing " more than a Bishop, a Judge, or a Lord; " nay, had he even been a Gentleman, you " might with the greatest propriety have " taken any liberties with his name and cha-" racter, but he is none of these. He is "much greater than a King." Observing we looked aftonished, he continued, "that "this should appear doubtful to you, is not " owing fo much to your want of fenfe, " as of instruction, and it shall always be my " endeavour to improve, and enlarge your " minds by degrees, and to explain this " matter to you in a familiar, eafy way; an-" fwer me---which is the greater, the Tun " that honest Cooper makes, and unmakes at "his pleasure, or the man who makes it?" --- "They're pretty nearly of a fize," anfwered I .-- " As to bulk, I grant it," faid the Speaker: "but (this is a fubject not to be " joked with) a man who can not only make " and unmake Kings in his leifure hours, but " can fatisfy the commonest Tinkers they " may and ought to do the same, is surely " greater than the Kings themselves .--- Yes, " he is far, far greater than a King---as a "Republican, he is the most consequential " of Monarchs, and is actually now a " Judge---a very King of Kings. Knowing " perfectly his real character and views, I " only wonder the Patriots, --- the real Patriots " of

of every nation, do not unite in fond contention, and pull him limb from limb,

" that each country might proudly fay---

" Here lies a part of Thomas Paine!"

"If that should ever happen," said a Butcher in company, "I hope I shall have "his Heart."---" You have it already," said Mac'Serpent, "and not only you, but every "Butcher has his Heart; he has followed many Trades, and sailed in all; but butchers and butchery were ever his de- light; there's not a page in that invaluable little book but tends to promote that business: in short, Virtue and he are one."

He then sang us some sunny Songs; and, after drinking to us, he read aloud out of a book written by one Rochester, and sinished the evening with a sew pages about the Rights of Man, explaining it to us as he went on, and shewing us, completely to our satisfaction, that we were in the most miserable state possible, without either Liberty or

Property belonging to us.

Matters went thus on so long, that some of us, who had hitherto lived Happily and Contented, and really wanted for nothing, began to fancy we were in want of everything, and had no right to be Happy and Contented any longer; no, those privileges were not to be found among the Rights of Man. My wise, good woman, was quite grieved to see me so changed, both in my Temper of mind and industry; she would tell me, indeed, what

was true enough, that neither I nor my family wanted for any thing; she faid, I was downright wicked to be fo discontented, while I lived fo comfortably; it was ingratitude to God, and, for her part, she could not fee the fense of liftening, as I did, to a fellow that was always frightening and talking me out of my happiness; that I was as simple as my neighbour Jenkins, who leaves the Church to follow a Methodist Preacher, because he comforts him every Sunday with the promife of certainly being damned. Now, though I don't like to give way too much to my wife, I could not help being fecretly within myself satisfied; there was a great deal of good fense in what she said. My father too. who is above fourfcore, yet has his wits as sharp about him as a Lad, would fometimes reason with me on my growing ill humour and discontent; he would fav, "Ralph! "thou art wrong, very wrong, to fall out "thus with your own happiness; and for "what? What have you to complain of? "What is it you want?" I repeated, as nearly as I could, Mac'Serpent's words, faying, "times were hard---very hard for poor "working people---every thing was very " dear--- and wages very low--- the rights of " man should be better understood, and every "body equal, and then there'd be plenty for " us all." --- " Pshaw! pshaw!" said my father, "this has partly been the cant ever " fince I was a boy. I never knew the time

** yet but what fome folks were discontented; "but if you're not fatisfied now, more shame " for you. I always was a careful man my-" felf, and your poor mother worked like a " horse, but we never could live as you do " now-a-days; we worked hard, and lived " hard too, with homely Brown Bread for " our Bellies, and home-spun stuffs for our " Backs ; --- why, if your Poor Mother could " look out of her grave, she'd think for cer-"tain you were now all turned Gentlefolks, " with your Bread as white as a curd---twice " a day drinking Tea from the East Indies, " with Sugar from the West Indies, and Spi-" rits from Holland --- with your Wives and " Daughters dreffed out in their cotton gowns, " filk cloaks, high bonnets, and gauzes, " ribands, and frippery enough about them "to make a wife man laugh, or to keep a " poor man's family for a fortnight --- and " amidst all this, you've impudence enough "to fay, times are hard---very hard for poor " people !---Out! out upon you! Had you " talk'd as much out of the way when you "was a lad, I'd foon have lick'd you into " better manners. And then, forfooth, while " your women are dressing like Ladies, you " must be talking like Parliament-men, about " Liberty and Equality. As to Liberty, indeed, "it's a word that fits an Englishman's "mouth fo well, I love to hear it spoken; " and I'll fay to you, as my father did to me " on his death-bed: I remember it was in " the the little chamber over the kitchen, where, " calling me to his bed-fide, He faid, 'Tom, " come hither and receive my last words---" May God blefs you; and remember by " Care and Industry to provide for your fa-" mily---by Honesty and Piety take care of " your foul; and let neither Rogues in Rags, " nor fellows in laced coats, difturb the Li-" berty of Old England. --- Aye, aye, I " love Liberty as well as any man; but for " Equality, this is a new touch, a new fa-" shion just brought over from France; and " I never knew any good come to England 44 from that quarter yet. As to God having made us all equal, it's nonfenfe---no two " men were ever equal yet. Why, there's " your brother Dick, he was from his Birth " the finest lad of you all; and, now that w you're men, you're none of you his equal, " either in understanding, skill, or industry, " fo that he's worth more money already "than all of you put together. Never tell " me, then, that every body should be equal. "Why, you Dog you, you would not go " to plunder your brother of his honest earn-"ings, because he has got more than your-" felf?" All this was very right to be fure; but, I'm ashamed to say, I liked better to listen to Mac' Serpent; for what my Father faid made me diffatisfied with myself, while Mr. Mac'-Serpent only made me diffatisfied with other People; fo we all kept liftening to him, till I verily believe, though he found us at first all

all Contented and Happy, he would very foon have been able to have made us as discontented and miserable as Heart could wish, if it had not been for the following accident:-One night, after talking a great deal in the usual way, about the hardships of the Poor; the Cruelty of the Rich; the dearness of Provisions; the lowness of Wages; and that every body should be equal, and the like, he went on to fay, it was our own fault for fubmitting to it; that we should make ourselves Heard, and Felt too, as the People in France had done, who were now all free and happy; but that we did not know what Liberty was in England; for, instead of making every body on a Level, and vindicating our own Liberties, we quietly submitted to be made Slaves, --- yes, Slaves! We were no better than a parcel of pitiful, dirty Slaves .--- This was language I did not like; for I knew I was a free-born Englishman, and Slave to no Man upon earth; but I did not care to begin talking against him: however, our young Blacksmith, Joe Thomas, (an honest good Fellow, who works hard, and lives well, with a pretty Girl for his Wife, and two brave Children,) fprung from his feat at the word Slaves.---"Slaves!" cried he, "you lie---we are no " Slaves;"--- and directly dealt him fuch a blow on his lantern jaws, as levelled him with the dirt. Joe, who is a kind-hearted Lad, though a little too warm and hafty. was the first to hold out a hand to help the Speaker

Speaker up again, faying, he was forry if he had hurt him much, for he meant him no harm, and hoped it would not happen again; but for the life of him he could not help it, it was a way he always had when he heard Englishmen called Slaves. I must own, we were all well enough pleased with the Blacksmith's spirit: for though (as my wife faid of the Methodists liking to hear they were damned,) we found fomething comfortable in being perfuaded we were starved, ill-used, and oppressed, and were All of us pleased at being told we ought to have every thing our own way---we none of us liked being called Slaves: however, peace was foon made; and Mac'Serpent, to shew his forgiveness, treated Joe with fome beer, inquiring, in the mean time, how he was to do in the world. Joe's heart being true English, and always open, told his history, which, though he was some time about, was briefly thus: -His Father, who had burnt not only his infide out, but the Cloaths off his Back, by frequenting ginshops, was for two years maintained by the Parish, and then died in the Poor-house, leaving a Wife and five little Children, Joe, the eldest, being only Twelve Years Old. Squire Compton, who, God blefs him, is always ready to help the Poor, took charge of all the Children, and bound Joe 'prentice to a Blacksmith, who, in working out his time honestly and industriously, hammer'd himself not only into the good-will of his Master,

Master, but of his Daughter also, to whom he has now been married about two years; and, though he only works under his Father-in-law, he has contrived, by care and industry, to support himself, his Wife, and two Children; and, with a little help from the Squire, to keep a Cow, a Pig, and some

Poultry.

When he had finished his story, Mac'Serpent replied, "Then what with your Cow, " Pigs, Fowls, Household Goods, and the "Implements of your Trade, you must be "worth Twenty Pounds, I warrant."-" I " would not take five and twenty," faid Joe. Poor Joe! little didst thou think, little did any of us think, how near you was to being plundered of these Treasures; but sure enough, next morning a Pettifogging Attorney was at Joe's house (just as he was sitting down with his Wife to breakfast, and had began telling her what a Friend to Poor Folks Mr. Mac'Serpent was, and how he loved him for talking fo fine about Liberty and Equality.) The Lawyer faid, he had directions to bring an action against him for an affault on the person of Mr. Judas Mac'Serpent; that he would do well to compromise the matter by giving him a Bill of Sale for all his Effects, as by that means, perhaps, Mr. Mac'Serpent's good-nature might be worked upon to withdraw the Action. The young Blacksmith was well enough inclined

to treat the Lawyer as he had done his Client, and to have knocked him down; but prudence for once got the better; fo he made the best of his way to Squire Compton's, where He, and every other Poor Man, was fure to be kindly received, and to have the best advice, and all the affistance he could possibly expect. In the mean time his Wife was not idle; the fent her Neighbours to intreat Mac'Serpent not to ruin her Husband, as he would do for ever, if he dealt so very hardly with him. --- She had fifty shillings in the house, she faid, and would give him every farthing of it: nay, her Cow too, if he would but let her husband off. We all did our best to serve her; we reminded Mr. Mac' Serpent of his own words, that he always called himself the Poor Man's Friend; that times were hard—very hard for us poor Working People—that fure he would not be the man to ill use and oppress another—Bread he knew was dear—and Wages low---and poor Toe had four mouths to feed. We reminded him he had often faid, Power was in the People's hands, and that it was their part to vindicate their own Liberties, and make themselves heard and felt too; Toe had done no more than he had taught him he should do; and we trusted he would forgive a hasty blow .-- He answered, with something between a fmile and fneer, that as we were all fuch friends to the Smith, if we would make

up Ten pounds amongst us, and Joe would fend it him by his Wife, perhaps to oblige us, and shew his regard to the Poor, he might pals over the offence. It was well the poor Fellow did not hear the propofal; he was within a little of it; for at that Moment in he came, conducting the Squire, who, after inquiring into the particulars of the business, several times intreated Mac'Serpent to forgive Joe, in confideration of his good character, and for the fake of his Family, who must all be ruined if he perfifted; but his intreaties could make no impression on the heart of Mr. Mac'Serpent, which, when Squire Compton perceived, he walked gravely up to him, and addressed him thus: "Sir, what "I have faid to you in behalf of this poor "Fellow, was only to try to what excess of " cruelty a man who is a Traitor to his "King and Country could carry his refent-" ment."-" Traitor!" replied Mac'Serpent, "Bear witness all of you, I am called a "Traitor; you shall pay dearly, Sir, for " that word. I'll bring an action." --- " Don't " bluster here," faid the Squire, (taking part of a torn letter from his pocket,) " you no " doubt would have disowned this letter to " belong to you, had I presented it to you " when it was first found, which was four " days ago. As the direction was torn off I " read it, and, finding it contained Treason, "I ordered diligent fearch to be made, and " have fortunately procured the other half. C 2

" See, Sir, the torn parts fit exactly, and it " is directed to you." Mac'Serpent, whose face was generally of a Dirty Yellow hue, turned dead white, his Teeth chattered, and a dreadful Odour filled the room; but, recovering himself, he in a moment snatched the le ter from the Squire's hand, and, stuffing it into his mouth, would certainly have fwallowed it, had not Joe Thomas that instant seized him by the Throat, and thrusting a black finger about four inches into his mouth, recovered this Paper which had created fo much surprize to us all. Mac'Serpent now falling on his knees, begged the Squire in his turn, not to put the law in force against him, as it would be his ruin. He faid, he would forgive Joe, and return home, never to shew his face in the country any more. We were all so touched with his Tears, that we joined in begging for his pardon, faying, though he had been a little too hard with Joe, he was a very civil, kind, good fort of Man, and always declared himself a Friend to the People in general, and to all of us in particular; and, as Joe was ready to forgive him, we hoped the Squire would also. But Mr. Compton, turning to us with a fmile of pity, replied, " My honest friends, you do not "know what you alk; was it me only that " he had offended, my forgiveness should " flow as freely from my heart, as do my " Prayers and best Services for the good of " my country; but when I detect a Traitor

to

to my Country—a Rebel to my King— " a Wretch, who, for the base hire of a little "French Money, would fubvert the Go-" vernment, and fell the Liberties of old " England to our inveterate and infidious ene-" mies the French.—A Serpent whom you " have fimply fostered in your bosoms, till he " fixed his envenom'd fangs in your hearts, " and poisoned your minds with a jealoufy of " your Superiors, and a discontent of your " situation. To let such a Viper escape, " would not be mercy, but cruelty. I would " as foon turn lofe a tyger whom we know " would live only to stain the happy fields of " England, with the blood of its Labourers. "But when I explain to you this Villain's " character, you will fee, and join in, the " justness of my indignation: this Letter is " written in the French Language, and from " one of those people called Jacobins, which, "when turned into English, is exactly thus:

· Sir,

The National Convention of France are enchanted to find you and so many other active men ready to serve the cause of France against England. Your salary is fixed at four livres per day, and for this it is expected of you to do all in your power to create disturbances in different parts of England, so as to promote the views of France, which are first to ruin, and then to subdue your island. To effect this, you must

e must mix, as much as possible, with the 6 lower orders of People, and endeavour to " make them discontented with their present fituation, and jealous of those above them; repeat frequently that every thing is shamefully too dear, and that wages are shamefully too low. But as I understand a good workman in England can at most trades earn, in four days, enough to keep him the whole week, encourage luxury, drinking, and extravagance amongst them, as much as possible; for a Debauched life, while it increases their expences, naturally disqualifies them from Earning money, and " must, in the end, bring that real distress we with, on themselves and families. I un-· derstand the Harvest in England was rather unfavourable, this may probably be turned greatly to our advantage; but you must ' mind how you proceed, for as the People in England have much natural good fense about them, and know well enough a bad · Season must make in a greater, or less degree, a fcarcity, and confequently an in-· crease in the Price of Provisions; you must, onot attempt to perfuade them, as we did the e ignorant people in France; that it was the King, the Lords, and other great Folks, ' that spoiled the Season; or that however fcarce Wheat was, Bread should always be at the fame price: no, that won't go down with them; but you must pass over the Harvest as well as you can, repeating frequently,

quently, " every thing is fo fhamefully "dear, poor folks cannot live."-Thus, while you are fomenting discontent amongst them, you are to endeavour, as far as posfible, to lessen their respect for their Supe-' riors,-and more especially take pains, to 'lower the attachment they have to their 'King .--- But here again I should advise 'you to take care how you proceed, for I am informed the King of England is ' greatly beloved by his People, being uni-'verfally respected for his Private Virtues his Love of Mercy, and constant attention to ' the welfare of his subjects; therefore, you ' must proceed with caution, or it is ten to one, you are either knocked down at the ' time you are speaking against him---or are ' tied up to a Gibbet foon after. It will be no bad way, to have always ready in your ' pocket, a few small Books to produce, as oc-' casion requires; for instance, a collection of the loofest Songs and Stories you can get. ' A translation of a blasphemous Book I'll send ' you from France against Christianity; -and 'Tom Paine's Rights of Man; they will do ' very well bound up together, and cannot fail, ' if duly attended to, corrupting many weak ' minds, and will certainly be pleafing to ' those who are already corrupted. We were ' much grieved to hear the People had, in ' many parts of England, been burning 'Thomas Paine in Effigy; I hope they do · not

not begin to discover what a Cat's Paw he has been trying to make of them. Always deny his being a Citizen of France, and · Member of the National Convention, for 'you'll never perfuade people who know what a thorough Frenchman he now is, that he can possibly be a Friend to England: ono, no, they know Frenchmen too well for that. I have also to add, it is expected of ' you to use all the dispatch you possibly can, for if you and our other good friends cannot contrive to create an Infurrection in Engand, I fear we shall most of us be forced to fly from France, without having any other · Country open to us; as the people here begin to find out, how we have led them by the Nose to their ruin; for we assured them, they had only to help us to destroy the King, the Nobles, and Clergy, and there would be Liberty, Equality, Happiness, and Plenty, for every body. But they find now, we only fet them to murder the Great, that we might take their places ourselves; and that instead of Happiness and Plenty, they are fallen into the most deplorable Misery and Diffress. The Rich being all either murdered or driven from the Kingdom; the People have now no body to work for, confequently they can earn nothing; while Provisions in general, and Bread in particular, is fo scarce, that Hundreds are actually dying of Hunger. To mention one amongit a mul-

a multitude of fuch cases, we sent Com-'missioners from the Convention, to the Department of Var, to inquire into the cause of the discontent the people began to ' shew, at the Happy state we had placed them 'in; when the Commissioners came to make their report in the Convention, I thought fome of us must have died with laughing; and as I know you have spirit to enjoy a ' joke of this fort, I'll tell it you, in the dull old stile, which gives it much of its Poig-' nancy.—The Commissioners, after telling " us they had fulfilled our Orders, faid, they ' found the Misery and Distress of the People 'at the height.—They would present us with one small picture, which though a miniature was a just representation of the fituation of the whole Department. A Poor woman (whole hufband was decoyed away under the idea he was going to defend the Liberties of his 'Country) with two Children, one in the cradle, the other just old enough to put its Little hands together, and pray to its Mother for a bit of Bread; having subfisted some time on a mixture of Bran and Cabbage; this s poor woman went at last with her only rcmaining fix-pence to purchase a small Loaf; the Baker affured her, he had neither Bread onor Flour in the house; so she returned 'home, and after lying all night diffracted with her own fufferings, and the piercing 'cries of her Children; she set out again early in the morning, but still receiving the ' lame

fame answer, she was obliged to return empty handed: in her way, she could not · help casting a mournful Eye at the great 'Manor House, saying within herself, had 'not my Husband, amongst others, helped to murder the Master of that Mansion, I fhould not now be at a loss where to apply ' for a morfel of Bread—but Repentance came too late, she returned home, and endea-' voured by tenderness and careffes, to ap-· peafe the agonies of her starving Children. But Her breast, whose milk was absorbed by Famine, was in vain presented to allay the quick faint cries of the younger Infant; onor could the new Rattle any longer allure the attention of the elder child from the urgent calls of Hunger; it's agonies became every moment more violent, and its folicitations and careffes more touching; repeatedly did it try those pleasing efforts, and en-' gaging ways, which in happier days infured ' its obtaining from the fond Parents every trifling object of indulgence it befought. In vain ' were all its Little Hands, emaciated with Fa-' mine, placed together, and Pray! Pray! ree peated. It all ferved but to heighten the diffrac-' tion of the Mother, who once more fet out ' in fearch of Bread; but the Bakers were now themselves dying with hunger, and the ' distresses of her Neighbours, were at least equal to her own; the anguish of her · Body and Mind were heightened beyond endurance, and she returned home in a state

of distraction, where she found her Children worn out with fuffering in a state be-'tween fleep and death; but dreading to hear their cries repeated, and to fee them wake and cling round her for food she could 'not supply; she formed the horrid resolu-' tion of terminating their sufferings at once, ' and actually destroyed them in their sleep, to prevent their waking to undergo farther ' fuffering. What made this joke the better, was to think how the Father of this Family was employed in the mean time; He, l'oor Fool, with a musquet ball in his Leg, was ' marching, half naked, half famished, and bare-footed, over Ice and frozen ground, to ' plant, amidst the Snow in Brabant, what we call, the Tree of Liberty; under the ' persuasion, Poor Creature, that all this was exemplifying the Rights of Man, and highly for the advantage of himfelf and Family. But you must keep all this from the People of England, as you will never be able to excite them to fly in the face of power, if ' they are informed beforehand of the confequences that must ensue from the subversion of order,—the confounding the different classes of mankind, and the suspension of ' Labour and Industry; besides, the People of England are not fuch refined Philosophers as we are, they are not yet able like us, amiable ' and enlightened Frenchmen, to look with 'indifference, nay, with pleasure. on the Sufferings and Distresses of their Fellow " Crea-D 2

Creatures. For, Sir, to the honour or France, and the feelings of a Frenchman, I can affure you I have, myfelf, feen with 'pleasure, Grey-headed Priests, Beautiful young Women, and Children of all ages, ' murdered in the Public Streets, at Noon day, under the most exquisite refinement of what formerly would have been called studied 'cruelty, and licentious Indecency.—I have dwelt the longer on these laughable circum-· stances, to prepare you the better for the Fun 'you must expect to see in England, when our glorious Plan takes place there. When the Confusion amongst you is at the height, write word only, "we are ready," and we will fend over to you, some bands of armed men, who will foon completely finish the ruin of that Island, which has so often 'humbled the pride of France.'

Here ended the Letter; and it is hard to fay, whether we were most Ashamed, Fright-ened, or Enraged. We were Ashamed of our own simplicity that such a Wretch should have talked us so far out of our senses, as to make us fancy Evils we did not feel, and which, indeed, we knew perfectly well, had no existence in reality: we were ashamed, too, of the ungrateful things he made us sometimes say against the Gentlefolks in the neighbourhood, who are all Real kind friends to us, and to whom many of us had the greatest obligations. We were frightened at the idea how

how near we were to having been Rebels,—
Traitors,—and Subverters of the Liberties of
our Country: we were conscious too, we
had many of us actually gone so far, as to endeavour to communicate to others, those
Maxims Mac'Serpent had instilled into us;
consequently were not without uneasiness,
lest we should be considered as accomplices in

his Villany.

We were enraged at the reflection of having been fooled by fuch a Scoundrel, and at our own stupidity in not seeing he was only making us the Tools of his Villany. But when we looked at the Figure of the Wretch, saw how like an Assassin he looked, and knew he was, beyond all doubt, proved to be a Traitor to our dear and happy Country,—a Rebel to our good and beloved King,—and a Serpent who had endeavoured to imbitter, by his Poison, the bread of the Labourer, by creating discontent in our minds, and a jealousy of our Superiors; we could with disficulty refrain from tearing him to pieces.

But the Squire reproved us, faying, its would be highly dangerous, and unjustifiable for us, to destroy a fellow creature, at the impulse of our own passions;—the life of a man was of too great import to be forfeited, till after a solemn and formal trial, and he had, by the Laws of his country, been condemned to Death.—Happily for Englishmen, our laws, though ever inclined to mercy, and serving as a sure guard and protection to the innocent,

were too good,—too wisely formed,—to suffer such a Wretch to escape their just vengeance.
—He then addressed us thus:

"You fee here a fad example of human " depravity, and I wish I could say he was " the only Monster of the kind who wishes " to plunge a Dagger in the Breast of his " Mother Country.—But I fear there are too " many of these Agents, who are paid by " France, to excite discontents and infur-" rections amongst us, as the only means of " fubverting a Country, at the very name of "which she trembles.—These wretches " would be the less dangerous, was it not for "that readiness with which the lower or-" ders amongst us catch fire at, and join in " any cry the artful and wicked hang out for "them. You are too jealous, my honest " friends, not only of Those who fill the higher " ranks of life, but too apt to be Envious of "those of your own order, who have by supe-" rior skill and industry, surpassed you in attainments, or the acquisition of Fortune; "this makes you, I am forry to fay, ready " to liften to, and adopt any fystem the " ill-defigning hold out, if they can per-" fuade you it will be the means of gratify-"ing those passions which are unworthy of a " place in minds naturally Generous.—But "you may depend upon it, there can be no " just way of your becoming Equal to those "who are now Above you in life, but by the " efforts of honest industry, assisted by a strict

"Frugality; and on fuch a foundation every " Englishman may build in reasonable expec-" tation, under God's bleffing, of raifing his " house to Grandeur, in the course of Time: It " is true, all men have not the same Oppor-" tunities, or the same Abilities to help them " forward in life; God has not given every " man an equal degree of understanding, or " of Bodily strength, to make his way with; " from whence it is plain he meant there " should be different Degrees and Orders "amongst men; though few are so much " inferior to others but they can, (if they ex-" ert their best and proper efforts,) obtain a " fufficiency to ensure them the enjoyment of " the necessary comforts of life; and if they are " careful to instil Proper Habits of Industry, " and Sentiments of Morality, into the minds of " their Children, they may probably arrive at " a degree of Eminence their Parents did not " attain to; not that I confider an advance-" ment of Fortune to be a Certain Increase of " Happiness; it has often, I believe I may " fay generally, a different effect, especially " if Pride, Vanity, or Ambition have been " the Spring of our Industry, and Spurred us " forward in our Atfainments; these passions " are infatiable; and every fresh acquisition " we make, instead of allaying their Fervour, " adds fuel to a flame always too Ardent, to " allow the breast that harbours them the " enjoyment of that Tranquillity and Content " which is the best, and, indeed, only foun-" dation

dation for Happiness. You may believe " me, then, when I affure you, that the "Great have no advantages over You, but what are fully counterbalanced by fufferings vou are free from. If the rich are exempt " from labouring, they have rarely the health " of the labourer; and their time, their very Existence, is often a burthen to them for want of Employment. If they fuffer not " from hunger, the utmost Art of a Cook is " requisite to prepare a meal they can relish. If they are less exposed to the inclemencies of the Seasons, the tone of their nerves, re-" laxed by indulgence, hath neither the force " nor energy of a Peafant's; and as the Coun-" tenance is in this respect the index of the heart, turn your eyes, first on the " crowded Assemblies of the Great, and af-" terwards on the Festive Meetings of the "Lower Class, and ask yourselves which " party Happiness seems to join with---ob-" ferve the Languor, the painful laffitude that " reigns through the former, and contrast it with the Cheerful flow of spirits, and fes-"tive roars of Laughter that exhilarates the " latter. Yes, my honest friends, the higher " orders deserve your Pity, at least as fre-" quently, as your Envy. When God laid, " as he clearly has done, a foundation for "different orders and ranks in Society, he " was too just, too impartial a Father to " us all, to make an unequal distribution " of Happiness, which he has rendered " equally

equally attainable by all; and the highest, " or lowest, must arrive at it by the same means; namely, by the cultivation of mo-" ral virtues, by preferving a Conscience void " of offence towards God and man--and each " doing the Duties of that state of life in " which it has pleased God to place us .---"Thefe habits alone can produce Tranquillity " and Contentment, without which the Great " Man in his Palace, and the Poor Man in "his Cottage, must be alike, and equally " miserable.-View then the Rich Man, not as an object of your Envy, but as a Fellow "Creature, placed above you to fill a station, without which some of the brightest virtues " of humanity could not be exercised. Why " has Providence rendered Charity, Muni-"ficence, and Generous Hospitality so ami-" able, if he did not mean these Virtues " should be displayed? And how can they " be displayed, if there is no Rich Man to " give, or Poor one to receive? If you " fay the cultivation of these virtues is some-" times neglected by the Great, -what con-" clusion can you draw from such an abuse " of power? We ought only to lament, that " in fuch inftances we find men who are in-" capable of tasting the most refined pleasure " a fensitive mind can enjoy, and which Pro-" vidence feems to have given them the " means of gratifying, purposely to compen-" fate for the Troubles and Anxieties, the " Tedious Formalities, and Endless Restraints

"which are attendant on greatness --- It is " certain the Riches of one man are not ne-" ceffarily either the Cause or Consequence " of another's wants. The Great man can " confume no more of the necessaries of life " than does the Poor man; therefore, if the " latter suffers from Hunger, it is not because " the great man hath Eaten more than his " share of bread, (for that Providence has " rendered impossible) but it must have hap-" pened from a neglect of the due observance of the duties necessarily imposed on the " different orders of fociety; that is, the " poor man's fufferings must have originated " eithet from neglecting the duties of his " station, which are industry and economy; or from the rich man's neglecting, what is equally his duty; namely, a readiness to attend to and fuccour those who are in " a state of want, supposing that state re-" fults not from Idleness or Profligacy. View, "then, the great man as the fource from "which the necessaries of life flow, and " are distributed amongst Thousands, he is, " in reality, no more than the poor man's "Treasurer, -a kind of public Banker, " from whom every one that works, be his " trade what it will, draws his fustenance: " hence, while the Envious Man views the " splendid Equipage of Pomp with the ma-" lignant Jealoufy of a Demon, the Philo-" fophic and Benevolent Observer contemof plates it with pleasure, as displaying mu-2

" tual Obligations, equally conferred and re-"ceived by the different ranks of fociety; " for while he views the Pomp and Grandeur " of state, supported by the labour of the "Mechanic, he reflects that the wants of the " Mechanic, in return, must have been sup-" ported from the Hand of Opulence; I " hope, then, you are convinced, that gra-" dations in Rank are indispensably necessary " for the well-being of Society; nay, I will " not hefitate to affert, that you cannot " lower One great Man, without more ef-" fentially injuring a multitude of poor ones; as hundreds of Mechanics obtain their " daily bread, by fabricating splendid Trifles, " which none could purchase but from the

" superfluities of their fortune."

When the Squire first began speaking to us, we all stood round him with our Hats on, a habit we had lately imbibed from Mac' Serjeant's lessons, thinking we thereby afferted our Equality and Liberty; but we now began to think fuch behaviour was a mark, not of our Liberty, but Impudence; fo. one after another in fuccession, (as we had been more or less tainted in our principles by Mac'Serpent) began to assume a more respectful and becoming deportment, and to bow and thank him for his good advice; the Fat Cooper faid, "he was never fo pleased in his life, as " he was now, to find he had no occasion to " be discontented or envious any longer; " that Mac'Serpent had told him it was his "duty as an Englishman, to be out of hu-" mour, E 2

" mour, and as he faw all his neighbours " being fo, he had done his best to be like "Them, but it went most confoundedly " against his nature.-However, that was " all cleared up now, and if he lived to a " hundred, he should always consider the " Rich Man, in future, as nothing more "than-the Poor man's Goose; who was his " fupport while he let Her lay her golden " Eggs gradually. But when tempted by " the Devil, and his own greediness, he " cut her open, He not only destroyed his " best Friend, but died of hunger, because " fhe was no longer at hand to supply his " wants. I think, continued he, if I should " come across another of these Jacobine " Scoundrels, I shall know how to handle " him; but for fear he should be too cun-" ning for me, I shall be glad if you can " give me a few directions, that I may be " fure I don't get a wrong Sow by the ear; " because I suppose, Sir, a man may talk " about Liberty, and all that, without being " one of these Jacobine Frenchmen." " Undoubtedly," answered the Squire; " for of all Men who pronounce that glo-" rious word Liberty, the French Jacobine " knows the least what it means. Their " nation, Vain and Impetuous, is for ever in " the extremes; from Slavery they have " passed at once to licentious Anarchy, over-" looking that Golden mean which Liberty, " like the Moral Virtues, confifts in; emeran Englishmen, to be out of hu-Juoin 11

" ging from the profoundest ignorance, they are at once become, in their own opinions, " the most sublime Philosophers; from the " meanest servants, of the meanest trades, " they have many of them become at once " Senators and the Greatest Statesmen; while " avowed Atheists and Felons, just iffued " from the Gallies and Prisons, are reform-" ing the Religion of their country; and all " this amidst a universal cry of Liberty, which " it resembles no more than their present " Famine does the Plenty of England. But " let us leave them for the present to the " fufferings and miferies their wicked enor-" mities have justly brought on them. As " to giving fuch rules as shall guide you to " the fure discovery of these dangerous " Agents, paid to promote discontent and in-" furrection here, I fear it is impossible, they " artfully affume fo many shapes, and in-" finuate their poison by such different means, " it is very difficult to let you on your " guard against them; and what makes " the Difficulty still greater, is the Danger " you are liable to, of being feduced by " fuch amongst your Friends and neigh-" bours as you respect, and whose opinion " you look up to, who having been de-" ceived or corrupted themselves, easily 46 communicate the infection through the " whole circle of their acquaintance. But "I advise you to be very cautious how you 46 listen to any man, whose conversation " feems

" feems calculated to make you discontented with your own Situation, or the Laws, or "Government of your Country. - Should " our glorious Constitution, that Bulwark of "Liberty, which is the Pride and Glory of " Englishmen, ever be in danger from the attacks of its Foreign, or Domestic Enemies, "depend upon it you will be warned of your Peril, by the Greatest and most respectable " Members of Society, who, as you may ob-" ferve, (on the present attempt to subvert our " Liberties by the introduction of Anarchy,) " have come forward themselves, and called " on you to affift their Efforts, to support Or-" der in Society, and the Liberties of the State. " - When you hear any Person talking " warmly of Liberty and Republicanism, " however you may respect the man for his " focial virtues, as an Englishman, you " cannot respect his Political Principles, for " the Liberties of a Republican are certainly " not the Liberties of an Englishman, which " are founded on another Basis, and are esta-" blished under a Government confisting of a " King, Lords, and Commons. To enlarge on " the bleffings we enjoy under fuch a form of "Government, is needless; our Fathers be-" queathed it to us, and I hope we shall main-" tain it at the expence of our blood, rather " than not transmit it pure and entire to our " children. For who is there amongst us, " who does not feel he enjoys under it, Li-" berty in its truest and fullest extent, which 46 COR-

"confifts in every man being able to do what he pleases, that is not detrimental to another."

Here the Squire took his leave of us, ordering Mac'Serpent into the hands of a Constable, and a Bucket full of Strong Beer for us, in which we drank CHURCH, and KING, and OLD ENGLAND for ever.

FINIS

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